

CITY OF BELLEVUE
CITY COUNCIL

Summary Minutes of Study Session

December 9, 2002
6:00 p.m.

Council Conference Room
Bellevue, Washington

PRESENT: Mayor Marshall, Deputy Mayor Degginger, and Councilmembers Creighton, Davidson, Lee, Mosher, and Noble

ABSENT: None.

1. Executive Session

Mayor Marshall opened the meeting at 6:00 p.m. and announced recess to Executive Session for 30 to 40 minutes to discuss one item of potential litigation and one item of property acquisition. The Study Session resumed at 6:45 p.m. with Mayor Marshall presiding.

2. Study Session

(a) Permitting Process for Single-Family Remodels and other DSI Improvements

City Manager Steve Sarkozy asked staff to provide an update on the Development Services Initiative (DSI), which is an effort to streamline the City's permitting and land use review process to enhance efficiency and customer service. Jocelyn Mathiasen, Assistant to the City Manager, recalled staff's DSI presentation to Council during the October 28 Extended Study Session. She noted that tonight's discussion, in response to Council direction, will focus on proposed improvements to the permitting process for single-family remodels and additions.

Building Official Mike Brennan said City Council, the Construction Code Advisory Committee, and customers have provided input on ways to improve the permitting process for single-family remodels and additions. The proposed goal is to complete permit reviews for remodels within 14 days and reviews for additions within 21 days. Additional targets of one revision per permit application and less than 20 percent of permits requiring a revision are desired. In the current process a permit application is subjected to multiple reviews (land use, utilities, building, etc.), each of which could require a revision by the customer. In the proposed process, a customer will speak to a review staff person at the time the application is submitted. If the application is complete, it can be approved immediately and a permit is issued. Mr. Brennan said the new

process is currently being tested and customers appreciate being able to discuss their applications upon submittal to identify whether revisions are needed.

Mr. Brennan provided an update on additional DSI work items. Staff members have developed a system to identify and address code conflicts between reviewing divisions, monitor how conflicts are resolved, and communicate the resolution to the customer. A summary of the issues and solutions will be posted on the Intranet for staff's use and published in the City's *Blueprints* newsletter that is mailed to the development community.

Mr. Brennan said all staff using the City's permit tracking system (AMANDA) have completed a refresher training session on the system to maximize its effectiveness and improve the quality of information that is entered. The public can now access the system to review the status of a permit or project. The MyBuildingPermit.com web site, a partnership of Eastside cities, continues to be updated with technical information to assist the public and improved navigational features. Approximately 25 percent of over-the-counter mechanical, electrical, and plumbing permits are now being issued through this site.

Ms. Mathiasen said customer surveys have been conducted for the past two years and the results will be shared with Council in January. A review and discussion of development services fees is scheduled with Council for the spring.

Mr. Mosher praised staff for the ongoing successes of the DSI work program. He suggested adding to the web site the capability of looking up projects by neighborhood, rather than needing to enter a specific address.

In response to Mr. Lee, Ms. Mathiasen said staff is working to incorporate the customer survey form into the web site to make it easier for people to submit their comments and suggestions.

Responding to Dr. Davidson, Ms. Mathiasen said permit review sessions are handled on a walk-in basis. Staff members have been reallocated to ensure the permit center is properly staffed to provide this service.

Mayor Marshall praised staff's efforts to enhance the City's collaborative and educational approach with customers.

- (b) Meadowood Park Master Plan
(Council action to approve the park name and Master Plan will be scheduled after completion of the SEPA review.)

Todd Mitchell, Project Manager, described the planning process for a two-acre park site located at Forest Drive SE and SE 60th Street. Planning and development of the park is funded through the Mini Park Opportunities capital project (CIP Plan No. P-AD-52). The site contains a combination of flat grassy areas, slopes, and forested areas. There are two access points to the park, one at Forest Drive and one at SE 61st Place, which is a private road. It is adjacent to a Utilities-owned storm water management site and provides opportunities for nearby trail connections.

Mr. Mitchell said the planning process began in May 2002. Three community workshops and many emails and phone calls helped to define the proposed program. Input from residents focused on preserving the open fields, preserving and enhancing the forested area, and preserving the sledding hill. Residents expressed an interest in play equipment, a surface for rollerblading and bike riding, buffers to adjacent neighbors, improvement of the site's drainage, seating areas, a drinking fountain, and trash receptacles. Residents want to discourage or prohibit vehicle access to the park via the private road (61st Place).

Mr. Mitchell said three alternatives were developed, all of them containing play areas, pedestrian trails, drainage improvements, and general infrastructure such as seating areas and trash receptacles. Alternative 1 placed most of the development in the center of the park to minimize any impacts to the neighbors. Alternative 2 placed most of the amenities in the upper open field. Alternative 3 located more of the development in the lower field. Public comments on the three alternatives included the following:

- Residents suggested clustering the play equipment to allow for easier parental supervision. They also suggested locating the equipment near a hard surface area to allow for easier access and placing the equipment in a more visible area to discourage negative park uses.
- Residents were interested in a hard surface loop trail around the lower field for bike riding and rollerblading.
- Adjacent neighbors were concerned about noise from the forest path.
- Residents suggested adding benches and trails to the adjacent Utilities-owned property as well.

Mr. Mitchell said Alternative 4, the proposed Master Plan, was developed based on public input. This option contains two distinct play areas and an accessible trail system. It preserves the two large open fields, thereby minimizing the impact to any one adjacent neighbor, and provides vegetation enhancements and drainage improvements.

Mr. Mitchell said the park name was discussed with residents. The City's policy for naming parks is based on neighborhood or geographic identification, a natural or geologic feature, historical or cultural significance, a historical figure, or an individual who has made a significant land and/or monetary contribution to the park system. Thirteen names were proposed throughout the public process, the majority of which contained one or more of the following terms: meadow, forest, glen, and wood. There was no consensus on any one name, however.

Mr. Mitchell said the Parks and Community Services Board held a public hearing about the park on July 9, 2002. Approximately 20 citizens commented on the alternatives with about half supporting Alternative 4 and the other half wishing to see less development. On August 13, 2002, the Board recommended Council approval of Alternative 4 and Meadowood Park as the official park name.

Mr. Mitchell reviewed the following next steps:

- Complete environmental review process.
- Return to City Council for decision on Master Plan and park name – mid-2003.
- Park development is scheduled for the summer of 2004. It will be coordinated with the Transportation Department's proposed Forest Drive improvements.

Mayor Marshall suggested the park name be spelled correctly as two words, Meadow Wood Park. Mr. Mitchell commented that the Park Board was not necessarily committed to the spelling of the name as presented.

Responding to Mr. Lee, Mr. Mitchell said the estimated cost of the project is \$300,000 to \$500,000. Mr. Mitchell said much of the money will be spent to regrade and level the site, provide drainage improvements, and install amenities such as play areas and a trail system.

(c) Additional Findings of the 2000 Federal Census

Mr. Sarkozy opened staff's continued presentation of the 2000 Census findings, which were presented in part during the December 2 Study Session. Planning Director Dan Stroh noted that tonight's presentation will cover housing types, education and occupations, income and poverty, and commute trends.

Kevin O'Neill, Strategic Planning Manager, said 17 percent of Bellevue's housing stock was built during the 1990s, which is a smaller share than most of the neighboring Eastside cities. Nearly 50 percent of the housing units in Bellevue were built in the 1960s and 1970s. Approximately 55 percent of all Bellevue housing units are single-family, detached houses, with 15 percent occupied by renters. The number of housing units increased by 29 percent between 1990 and 2000. Structures with 20 or more housing units increased 70 percent during the same period, and single-family attached housing (such as condominiums and townhomes) increased by 80 percent.

Mr. O'Neill reminded Council that much of the growth in the number of units occurred due to annexations during the 1990s. He noted that the median value of a single-family home in Bellevue was higher in 2000 than countywide. However, the rate of increase in housing values during the 1990s was lower in Bellevue than most King County jurisdictions. Mr. O'Neill said monthly rents and mortgages increased faster than inflation during the 1990s. Approximately 25 percent of all homeowners and 40 percent of all renters were paying more than 30 percent of their income to housing costs in 2000.

Mr. O'Neill reviewed education and occupation statistics, noting that 53 percent of Bellevue's employed civilians are in management or professional jobs and 54 percent have achieved a Bachelor's degree or higher. He described income indicators for Bellevue and the region and noted fairly stagnant income growth in the region from 1989 to 1999. Bellevue's poverty rates are low with 5.7 percent of all residents living below the poverty level. Mr. O'Neill explained that the poverty level is established by the federal government and applies to all areas of the country.

Turning to commuting trends, Mr. O'Neill said the percentage of single-occupancy vehicles increased for the United States as a whole and for every state except Washington and Oregon. Average commute times remained fairly stable between 1990 and 2000, with no increase for Bellevue residents and only a slight increase for King County as a whole. An increasing number of Bellevue households had no vehicle in 2000 compared to 1990, and households headed by a senior citizen are less likely to have a vehicle than overall households.

Responding to Councilmember Lee, Mr. O'Neill said a family is defined as related individuals living in the same housing unit. A household can contain a family, a single person, or unrelated persons living together. Mr. O'Neill noted that families tend to have higher incomes than households overall.

At 7:54 p.m., Mayor Marshall declared recess to the Regular Session.

Myrna L. Basich
City Clerk

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